

President's Corner Exploring the Declines

by Mark Johnson

Any organization interested in watching wildlife is necessarily concerned with having sufficient numbers of wildlife to watch. Many of our members are convinced that many species are in decline; there just seem to be fewer birds to find. Older members recall seeing many warbler species, often at the same time in a single tree, during migration. During the 1950s, large rafts of ducks were reported in the open waters of the Chesapeake. Such moments seem exceedingly rare.

Logic tells us that, with increasing human encroachment, habitats are degraded, and there are just fewer places to find good birds. Pollution, the introduction of more exotic plant and animal species, and fewer large tracts of grasslands and forests, coupled with the degradation of tropical habitats, reinforce our fears.

However, these musings are logic coupled with anecdotes; are there indeed fewer birds? Censusing birds is not a simple or easy endeavor. How do you know the birds counted at one location are not the same individuals seen or heard from another? How are we sure that

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The Maryland Yellowthroat

Newsletter of the Maryland Ornithological Society

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CONFERENCE 2011

The 2011 Conference is set for May 20-22 at WISP in Garrett County. If you've missed the registration deadline, contact Janet Shields at janetbill@prodigy.net.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Election will take place at the annual business meeting Saturday, May 21. The slate of candidates, as presented by the Nominations Committee Chair Helen Patton:

President – Mark Johnson, Harford

Vice President – Maureen Harvey, Howard

Secretary – Janet Shields, Talbot

Treasurer – Dave Webb, Harford

POSTERS

To present a poster during the Wine and Cheese session, illustrating ornithological research in Maryland, contact Dave Ziolkowski, djziolkowski@yahoo.com.



CONFERENCE PIN

The winner of the 2011 MOS Conference Pin Contest is **Donald G. Jewell** of the Carroll County Chapter. We had some excellent entries this year, but his dramatic Hooded Warbler most impressed the judges. Congratulations, Don.

— John Malcolm
MOS Pin Contest
smudgie@comcast.net

May Count 2011 Saturday, May 14

Check the *Yellowthroat* Calendar where Andy Martin has put together a list of all the counts and compilers. A field checklist of May Count species can be downloaded from the MOS web site at www.mdbirds.org/counts/namc/namc.html. The statewide coordinator is Mike Welch, 301-685-3561, manddwelch@comcast.net.

CONFERENCE 2012: A Special Challenge for MOS Artists

Winter Birds! Winter Birds! Here come the winter birds! The 2012 MOS Conference is set for Ocean City next February. Think of the fun you'll have drawing winter birds for the pin design contest. But you'd better get started now, because the deadline for entries is November 1.

Contact John Malcolm for more details: smudgie@comcast.net.

President's Corner *continued from page 1*

all individuals (or species) were observed in a particular location? It's clear that mist-netting combined with point counts results in a marked increase in the number of species observed. It is also clear that some observers find more species than others; how do we account for differences among observers?

The best we can do is to take data from a variety of sources, increase survey events from each method, and try to minimize differences between samples. Researchers do just that with data from the Breeding Bird Survey and other site-specific counts. Clearly, these methods have limitations and must be done on a large scale if the data are to be robust. The results from some of these survey methods confirm our suspicions that many species are in decline—but some are on the increase, including some at regional or local areas. Examples include Red-tailed Hawk, Wild Turkey, Turkey Vulture, and Pileated Woodpecker.

Experts largely agree that the largest threat to many declining species is loss of habitat. This loss can affect the number of available breeding territories, reduce the quality of those sites, or increase the numbers of predators that feed on young. MOS has directed many efforts to saving habitats. Past benefactors have enabled us to maintain several high-quality sanctuaries. Our diligent Conservation Committee (Kurt Schwarz, George Alderson, Rick Dolesh, Maureen Harvey, and others) has been very active in writing letters in support of conservation efforts important to birds and birders throughout the country. Chapters and individuals have undertaken a variety of specific actions to help preserve habitats, even in the tropics. Others have focused on drawing attention to species and habitats in particular need, and striving to reverse dangerous declines.

The work put into our atlases helps us to identify specific trends and emphasizes

those areas and species meriting special attention in Maryland. Regional banding stations also provide information that can be combined with other data to help identify species-specific trends (though currently I am not aware of any meta-analysis of all of these data). Our Research Committee, chaired by David Ziolkowski, has striven to help fund important studies in Maryland to help us through the next step: to better understand why the declines are occurring. Through research we can attempt to identify the specific causes for these declines and conduct focused efforts into reversing them. Still, more data are needed, particularly for birds in migration and to investigate long-term population trends. These studies are not inexpensive and few of the latter are conducted. Through research we can attempt to identify the specific causes for these declines and conduct focused efforts into reversing them, and MOS is part of those efforts.

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Anyone is welcome to contribute articles or ideas that would be of interest to other birders. Copy may be mailed or e-mailed to Lydia Schindler by July 20, 2011 for the September/October 2011 issue.

*Illustrations pp. 1, 4 © M. Suzanne Probst
Photograph p. 5: Linda Field
Photographs pp. 6, 7 and 8: Karen Morley/Joan Cui
Photograph p. 9: Michael Bowen*

YMOS Web Site

Keep in mind that the youth division of MOS now has its own web site: <http://www.ymos.org/>. Though the site is new, there is a considerable amount of information up on it already. The site contains YMOS trip information, details on our World Series of Birding team, summer program information, birding basics, links, and educator resources. Please forward this link to any young birder or educator that you know or work with.

—George Radcliffe

Research Awards

Dave Ziolkowski, chair of the Research Committee, has announced that two proposals were funded this past winter. A post-doc from the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center will receive \$2,000 to study "The Effect of Subsidized Predators in an Urban Matrix"—an investigation of the impact of cats on bird mortalities. A PhD student at the University of Maryland was awarded \$450 to look into "Understanding the Causes and Consequences of Dispersal in Migratory Birds."

MD/DC Records Committee

Following its annual meeting in March, the MD/DCRC announced that Paul O'Brien (Montgomery) has stepped down after 11 years as Chair; he will be replaced by Bill Hubick (Anne Arundel). Phil Davis (Anne Arundel) was re-elected as Secretary.

Newly elected to a three-year term:
Matt Haffner (Harford)
John Hubbell (Montgomery)
Sherman Suter (DC)

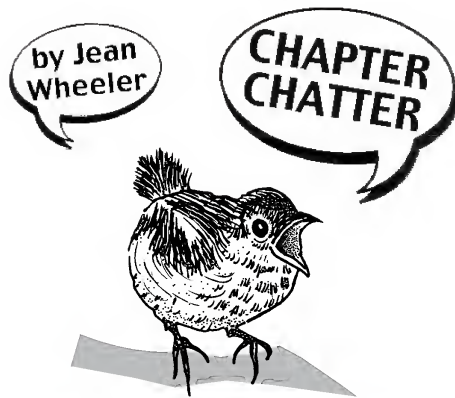
Completing three-year terms:
Mike Bowen (Montgomery)
Bill Hubick (Anne Arundel)
Fred Shaffer (Anne Arundel)

Continuing:
Gwen Brewer (Charles)
Walter Ellison (Kent)
Ron Gutberlet (Wicomico)
Joe Hanfman (Howard)
Mikey Lutmerding (Prince George's)
Dave Ziolkowski (Harford)



Birds of Note—by Les Roslund

- Mid-February in Maryland can seem far removed from Florida for any of us. On Feb 16 Florida must have also seemed remote for the WOOD STORK that showed up in the campground at Point Lookout SP in St. Mary's County. This very tired and possibly injured bird was found by Marty Cribb, who promptly called Tyler Bell to pass the word to the birding community. The bird was successfully found by quite a few birders during next 3 days because it reliably returned to a particular campsite during the daytime hours. Since the bird seemed lethargic and possibly had an injured leg, a rescue attempt was made, but unsuccessfully: On rescue day the bird showed it could fly well enough to avoid being caught. It was last seen at Point Lookout on Feb 19. On Feb 23 a WOOD STORK was reported in Sussex County, DE. Was this the same bird? It is comforting to think that it might have been.
- A YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD descended upon the feeding station of Patricia Rose in Callaway, St. Mary's County, on Jan 22 and stayed around through Jan 31. This bird was a first-winter male and was traveling in the company of a foraging flock that included Red-winged Blackbirds, Starlings, Cowbirds, and a few Common Grackles. During the visit period the bird's reliable early-morning presence and Patricia's gracious hospitality combined to provide a highly rewarding birding experience for many Maryland county listers.
- A longer period of enjoyment was provided by a CLAY-COLORED SPARROW in Worcester County. It was first located by Michael O'Brien of Cape May, NJ, way back on Jan 4 during the Ocean City Christmas Bird Count. This bird attracted numerous birders from early January through Feb 22, as it took advantage of the food and shelter conditions of an abandoned yard with nice hedgerows at the intersection of Mason Road and Rte 113 south of Berlin. Field trip participants from Talbot and Carroll Counties and from a YMOS outing were amongst the visitors, and nearly all attained great views. After a 7-week stand the bird departed.
- Several of the special sightings of the winter were of birds showing up in places where previous records were sparse. One such sighting was of a BLACK-HEADED GULL in Caroline County found by Dan Haas of Anne Arundel County on Feb 11. The bird was best seen as it rested on a small island in the Choptank River at Daniel Crouse Memorial Park in Denton. Several lucky birders found it there on Feb 12 and also on Feb 14. After Feb 14 it disappeared, but on March 5 it returned for another brief visit. The bird on Feb 11 was the first BLACK-HEADED GULL sighting for Caroline County since Feb 4, 2004.
- Birders in DC were treated to many nice sightings of gulls and waterfowl this winter. One of the most interesting visits was by a group of 11 CACKLING GEESE that showed up Feb 6 in the Washington Channel, Hains Point, DC. Dave Czaplak of Montgomery County was the first birder to report them, and he obtained some excellent photographs. Usually CACKLING GEESE are seen as individuals or in much smaller groups within the larger flocks of CANADA GEESE. The flock of 11 was still being seen in the same general area on Feb 9, but there were no later reports.
- Great numbers of geese were present this winter in the mid-shore counties of Maryland, including both Snow Geese and Canada Geese. This gave birders the fun of searching for rarities within the huge flocks. ROSS'S GEESE, CACKLING GEESE, and WHITE-FRONTED GEESE were reported at numerous sites. Certainly the most exciting find was made by Sam Dyke of Salisbury, as reported by Ron Gutberlet, also of Salisbury. On Feb 3 Sam found a BLUE MORPH ROSS'S GOOSE. This bird was within a large flock of SNOW GEESE in Wicomico Co near Log Cabin Road. As usual, the large flock moved around during the day, and later attempts by Sam and others to relocate this highly unusual bird were not successful.
- By early February this year many local birders were weary of what seemed to be a very long and cold winter, so sightings of birds of spring or summer were anxiously sought. One such sighting was of a DICKCISSEL at a feeder in Arbutus, Baltimore County. Scott Housten of Ocean City found the bird during a visit at the home of his girlfriend on Feb 2. The bird did not stay at the feeder very long and could not be relocated. Ten days later, on Feb 12, a YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT brought special joy to Brad Beukema of Montgomery County, who was birding east of Keedysville in Washington County. This sighting was a clear roadside view of short duration along Dogstreet Road, and the bird was not seen again. But alas! These birds were not likely to be migrants. Quick reference to the "Yellow Book" shows that small numbers of each of these species are known to remain in our region throughout the winter, though they may not be present every year.
- Early migrants were found at Truitt's Landing in Worcester County on two occasions. The first, reported by Dan Haas of West Annapolis on Feb 7, was of a LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER feeding amongst a group of 11 GREATER YELLOWLEGS. The second report was of a RUFF probing in the mud at the end of the road at the landing on Feb 10. The happy observers of this bird were Brad Cernohorsky, Jackie Cooper, and Ron Gutberlet, all of Salisbury. The RUFF cooperated enough to allow digiscope and video photography, but then flew over to the marsh and was not seen again.
- With Spring Equinox having passed, more and more of the true migrants will be coming in. Right on time, YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERONS showed up in Silver Spring, Montgomery Co, and Baltimore. The Silver Spring birds were found Mar 20 by Tom Stock at the usual nesting place beside Sligo Creek Parkway. The Baltimore birds arrived Mar 21 at the nesting site above the small pond on Ruxton Road near the intersection with Ellenham Avenue. Nico Sarbanes of Baltimore provided the report.



ALLEGANY & GARRETT COUNTIES

Mary Huebner was elected President of the Allegany & Garrett Counties Bird Club, replacing J.B. Churchill.
—J.B. Churchill

ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY

AABC member *Leo Weigant* traveled to Texas in late January to do some visiting and a little birding. The visiting went well, despite the worst snow/ice storm seen along the Gulf Coast in many years. Birding went very well, too, with Leo ticking off nearly 80 new species for his year list. Many of them were seen on the boat trip from Rockport up to Aransas NWR. He had better views than he'd ever had of the Whooping Cranes and every other wading bird. There was even a patriotic tableau of a Roseate Spoonbill, a white heron, and a Little Blue Heron posing in red/white/blue order. A friendly peregrine sat on a buoy 25 yards away at eye level. Most exciting, though, was the trip to the Rio Grande, where it took two tries to find a lifer, a Black-vented Oriole that stayed around until Leo arrived. Once the "chasing" was over, he enjoyed the newly reopened Sabal Palm refuge (on the "other" side of the Border Fence) and a few other rarities: Clay-colored and White-throated Thrushes, Buff-breasted Hummingbird. He spent one thoroughly pleasant half-hour at Bentsen-Rio Grande SP sitting on a bench by feeders, watching 3 Great Kiskadees, 5 Green Jays, and 3 Altamira Orioles—about as colorful as birding can get.

—Leo Weigant

CAROLINE COUNTY

Happy 60th, Caroline! The Caroline County Bird Club celebrated its 60th Anniversary on March 17 at the Caroline County Public Library. Caroline and Talbot members and friends attended this fun event. Special guests included *Bob and Connie Fletcher* (Bob is the son of the club's founding members, the late *Jerry & Roberta Fletcher*) and *Ethel Engle*, one of the club's oldest members. The local press was there and will be publishing an article about the event. President *Danny Poet* and Vice President *Bill Scudder* briefly highlighted some of the club's activities and contributions over the years. Members honored for years of service included *Steve Westre* for his many years of coordinating the Caroline County Christmas Bird Count, *Bill Scudder* for 50 years of membership, and *Debby Bennett* for her years of coordinating the club's programs and activities. Then there were cake and other refreshments and great fellowship. A slide show is available on the Club's web/blog: <http://carolinebirdclubmos.blogspot.com/>. Danny Poet relates this story: Steve Westre was telling a reporter covering the event about the CBC. He mentioned that this past year, Sam, one of his regular counters, left the tally rally at Steve's house only to return a few minutes later. Sam told Steve, "I left one of your friends on your picnic table" and left. Steve went outside and found a deer on the table; Sam had struck it with his car. Steve told the reporter, "I dressed that deer and froze the meat and there will be chili made from that deer this year after the CBC." Danny says the reporter's expression was "priceless"—then she said she didn't think she could print that!

—Debby Bennett

HOWARD COUNTY

"California dreamin' on such a winter's day"—the Mamas and the Papas sure got that right. *Jeff Culler* spent four glorious days in the southern California sunshine in late January. Both the birds and the

weather were wonderful. He birded San Diego and Imperial counties, racking up 181 species for the trip. One of the highlights was a visit to the Salton Sea and the Sonny Bono NWR. (Jeff never suspected when he was a teenager that 45 years later Sonny Bono would have a NWR named after him.) Unfortunately Jeff missed the Yellow-footed Gull while there. As for the Glaucous-winged Gull, well, "I got you, babe." The diversity of the birds that Jeff found in California, plus his Maryland birds in January, ranked him at the country's Number Two birder as of January 30, according to eBird. He may have slipped a bit since then, but it was nice to be King-for-a-Day.

—Kate Tufts

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

In January *Gail Mackiernan* and *Barry Cooper* spent two weeks enjoying the great birds of Guatemala. They visited only two sites: Los Tarrales Reserve on the slopes of Volcan Atitlan, and Tikal National Park in the north. Los Tarrales is a third-generation shade coffee plantation that has recently expanded into ecotourism. It preserves over 1,200 hectares of habitat, from dry deciduous scrub to cloud forest. The primo bird here is the enigmatic Horned Guan, critically endangered but present in fair numbers at the highest reaches of the volcano. Tikal is of course a World Heritage Site, known for its superb Mayan ruins but not as well for the 12,000 square miles of Mayan Biosphere Reserve surrounding it. This is lowland rain forest that supports a large number of birds and mammals, including Jaguar.

At Los Tarrales they saw almost 200 species, highlighted by Horned Guan—having made the 2-mile "Horned Guan Death March" up the steep volcano!—as well as multiple views of such special birds as Crested and Highland Guans, Tody and Blue-throated Motmots, Elegant Quetzal, Pink-headed Warbler, Azure-rumped Tanager, Hooded Grosbeak, and Prevost's and White-eared Ground Sparrows. Hummingbird

feeders attracted local gems such as Violet and Rufous Sabrewing and Long-billed Starthroat as well as many Ruby-throats in this, one of their prime wintering areas. One eye-opener was the large number of neotropical migrants, such as Tennessee and Magnolia Warblers, that preferentially use the plantations (rather than the intact forest)—again demonstrating the importance of shade coffee to these species.

After a week at Los Tarrales Gail and Barry flew north to Tikal National Park, staying at a hotel within the park proper. Here the spectacular ruins vied with the birds for their attention. In 4½ days of birding they recorded another 100 species, highlighted by spectacular views of two rare Orange-breasted Falcons viewed at eye level and close range from the top of Temple IV. Other goodies included Ocellated Turkey, three species of tinamou, four species of trogon, King Vulture,

multiple Royal Flycatchers, as well as a host of smaller species in active bird flocks. Among the most common wintering migrants were Wood Thrush and Kentucky Warbler.

On their last day they said goodbye to Guatemala City and boarded their flight to Houston. There they found all eastern airports closed due to the January 26 winter storm, so they spent the night at a Houston motel. Arriving in snow-bound Baltimore, it was an expensive taxi ride back to a house with no power, no heat, and no phone. “Why did we ever leave Guatemala?!”

—Gail Mackiernan

SOUTHERN MARYLAND

Southern Maryland has been lucky to have a second Yellow-headed Blackbird in St. Mary’s County since last fall. *Patty Craig*, longtime member, found one in Scotland in October, 2010. That bird was not entirely cooperative and many people trying for it missed it.

However, Patricia Rose, likely MOS prospect, noticed a first year male Yellow-headed Blackbird at her feeder on January 22. The bird continued daily through February 1. Patricia graciously accepted visitors into the warm comfort of her house to view this typically unreliable rarity. For the first 3 days of its visit, it appeared at precisely 7:46 AM. Talk about punctual!

—Tyler Bell

TALBOT COUNTY

Priscilla and Paul Thut traveled to South Texas in February with a group from the Brookline Bird Club of Boston. “Rarities were abundant in the Rio Grande Valley. We saw Yellow-faced Grassquit, Black-vented Oriole, White-throated Thrush, White-collared Seedeater, Crimson-collared Grosbeak, and Blue Bunting along with the usual winter residents. Great trip.”

—Karen Harris

WASHINGTON COUNTY

It’s early, about 6:30 a.m., on a Tuesday or Wednesday, and a Washington County Bird Club member is leaving home to arrive by 7:15 a.m. at the Claud Kitchens Outdoor School, a public school built in 1979 and located between Clear Spring and Hancock in western Washington County. For about the last 10 years, from September through May, volunteers have been coming in the early morning to teach birding to 5th grade students who are there for a 4-day/3-night stay. At the Outdoor School the youngsters can develop a sense of community, independence, and, most importantly, an appreciation and understanding of the environment and how they can keep it healthy.

As part of that environmental education, on one morning the students have the opportunity to learn about the world of birds. They come down from their dorms before breakfast to the roundhouse and start inside, where they are greeted by a WCBC volunteer who is ready with a lesson and props. First, the students are taught how to use the binoculars that were donated a few years ago by the WCBC chapter. Then the excitement begins as the birds wake up and begin to come to the feeders hanging out from the porch of the round house. There’s a flurry of feather talk and helping the students to identify the birds, using charts and field guides. The students are only there for about 45 minutes, so it’s important to give them as much information as possible in that short amount of time. Some of them have feeders at home and can identify



the cardinals or Blue Jays. What else might they see? On a recent February morning, in addition to the expected nuthatches, woodpeckers, chickadees, titmice, juncos, and finches, the class’s attention was caught by a large

flock of birds moving closer and closer to the roundhouse. Suddenly the trees were full of American Robins and Cedar Waxwings. The children were delighted with all the activity, especially at close range. There is usually enough time to take a short walk outside for more practice with the binoculars and for listening to bird sounds. A tally of birds seen on each of the visits is recorded in a notebook to determine how the bird life at the Outdoor School may, or may not, be changing over the years.

Starting the day with exuberant youth is more invigorating than a cup of coffee, especially when they express how disappointed they are that the birding class is only one day!

—Linda Field

HISTORY OF THE MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY: HOW WE CAME TO BE LOCATED AT CYLBURN ARBORETUM, AND WHAT'S GOING ON THERE NOW

BY KAREN MORLEY*

The Founding Years

In the late 1800s a group of Maryland scientists and amateurs revived the Maryland Academy of Sciences, which had been founded in 1797 but gradually faded. Then in 1929 a group of people with special interests spun off from the Academy to establish the Natural History Society of Maryland (NHSM). Finally, in July 1944 NHSM put out an "APPEAL TO BIRD LOVERS. . . for an organization devoted to the conservation of bird life." They wanted to form a bird club.

On February 23, 1945, the first gathering was held at NHSM headquarters in Baltimore's illustrious Bolton Hill neighborhood. Forty people attended, becoming the Charter members. This group was mainly from Baltimore and would eventually become the Baltimore Bird Club. The Maryland Ornithological Society, as it was then called, sponsored field trips and published a newsletter or bulletin called *Maryland Birdlife*, which is still being published today. The Hike Committee organized trips. The first MOS field trip was led by Irving Hampe on March 11, 1945. The group traveled by streetcar to the Lake Roland area and recorded 15 species. MOS quickly started organizing chapters; Irving Hampe, the first President of MOS, traveled around the state giving talks to various groups that were already meeting and were interested in birds. Today MOS has 16 chapters around the state.

Why at Cylburn Arboretum?

MOS was incorporated in 1956 as a non-profit organization to promote the study and enjoyment of birds. The group originally met at the Pratt Library, but in 1959 they moved to the Cylburn Arboretum. Cylburn is a 207-acre preserve



The Civil War-era Cylburn Mansion is situated in a 207-acre public park.

and public garden in northwest Baltimore City. Acquired by the City in 1942, Cylburn takes its name from the Civil War-era mansion built there by Jesse Tyson. It had opened as a park in 1954. Gerard Moudry, Chief City Horticulturalist at the time, graciously let MOS use the upstairs room at the mansion for its offices and eventually for the nature museum and other collections.

While MOS now functions as the statewide organization, originally "MOS" was also the name of the local group functioning as the Baltimore chapter of MOS—basically the "mother chapter" of MOS. In 1983 the local chapter changed its name to the Baltimore Bird Club (BBC) to provide better phone and contact recognition for the chapter serving Baltimore City and Baltimore County. This is sometimes confusing historically; however, most of the activities that took place at Cylburn were the work of what is now known as the BBC, while the MOS retained statewide functions.

In the early days BBC members did a lot of work with the City and Cylburn Arboretum Association (CAA), clearing property for trails in the park. They also helped provide nature education for city and county children. Working with the City Naturalist, they provided volunteers to meet these educational needs, and the BBC funded the buses to bring the children to the park. Members also went into city schools to teach natural history. From 1959 Martha Schaefer was the leader of this effort. When she moved away in 1979, Patsy Perlman took on the job; Joy Wheeler started working with Patsy in 1983. Patsy and Joy are still pursuing these activities at Cylburn today, and Joy serves as the MOS Librarian.

**with a lot of help from an article in the September 1995 issue of Maryland Birdlife, "Origin and Early History of MOS," by Don Messersmith*



Mounted specimens are on exhibit at Cylburn's remodeled Carriage House.



Dr. David Thorndill offers "Introduction to Birding" classes.

What's at Cylburn?

Under Martha Schaefer, the BBC started a Junior Nature Club in 1960. This led to the creation of a Nature Museum on the second and third floors of the Cylburn mansion. Children and adults brought items and specimens to the museum; other articles were collected during nature camps held around the state. Six antique bird dioramas, part of the Garrett Collection, are on permanent loan from Johns Hopkins University's Evergreen Mansion Museum & Library. Altogether these specimens form a significant contribution to present-day nature education programs at Cylburn. Unfortunately the club and camp disbanded in the 1980s, with its responsibilities turned over to MOS. However, for many years the BBC continued to fund school activities at nature camps such as Baltimore's Carrie Murray Nature Center.

The specimens now in the Nature Museum are but a small part of the total collections held by the BBC and MOS and housed at Cylburn. There are many natural history objects, including mounted birds, three egg collections from the late 1800s, bird nests, mammalian skulls, butterfly and turtle specimens, rocks and fossils, shells, and tree cones. In addition, a book and manuscript collection includes six archival field journals, several rare books, and a large bird and natural history library. MOS also maintains the journals of many national ornithological organizations, some of which are quite rare today. The BBC is undertaking a detailed computerized inventory of these collections, as well as the botanical and herbarium collections of the CAA. These collections are a valuable educational tool and serve as a research and scientific asset.

The current Nature Museum opened in the Carriage House in 2005 after Robert Dwight read a story in the *Baltimore Sun* about the Birds of Maryland Museum at Cylburn. Over 250 mounted birds of Maryland are on display in the museum, but the museum had been closed in 2004 for lack of handicapped access to the upper floors of the mansion. Mr. Dwight donated more than \$36,000 to the BBC so the bird museum and the nature collection could be relocated to a refurbished Carriage House. The BBC asked the Cylburn Arboretum Association (CAA) to administer the fund, and CAA raised additional money for the renovation. The museum is currently used by the City Naturalist, CAA, and the BBC for educational programs for city school children during the week and the general public on weekends. To provide more public access to this gem of a collection, CAA and the BBC are training docents so the museum can be open more often. Anyone who can donate one day a month to volunteering at the museum will be welcomed. While the CAA's educational arm schedules docents and museum openings, the BBC maintains and curates the specimens in the museum.

A Task Force is looking into the possibility of additional renovations to the Carriage House. We hope the result will allow us to expand public access to the natural history collections for educational and research purposes. Mr. Dwight, who provided more than half of the funds to create



The new, "green" Vollmer Visitor Center opened in 2010.

the current Nature Museum, has offered an additional generous donation to be used to expand the exhibit space on the first floor.

On May 1, 2010, the new Vollmer Visitor Center opened at Cylburn Arboretum. The Vollmer Center is a green building with a "living" roof, composting toilets, and geothermal heating and cooling. Unfortunately it does not have bird-friendly glass, a problem the BBC is working to mitigate. It does, however, provide state of the art facilities for meetings, and it houses the new eBird Trail Tracker donated by the Baltimore Bird Club (see box on page 8).

Cylburn continued from page 7

Cylburn and MOS today

Over the past few years the BBC has been working with the CAA and the City of Baltimore to improve our partnership and to enhance birding opportunities at the arboretum. Today MOS and the BBC regularly hold meetings at Cylburn. BBC programs take place the first Tuesday of each month (except July and August) at 7 pm. (More information can be found on the BBC web site at www.baltimorebirdclub.org.) The BBC also conducts a regular Sunday morning bird walk around the grounds during Spring and Fall migrations. Cylburn's trails extend more than 3.5 miles, and its bird checklist, updated and published in April, 2011, numbers 154 species. In addition, twice a year the BBC, in cooperation with the education committee of CAA, sponsors an "Introduction to Birding" class with Dr. David Thorndill. These classes have been very popular, and David has added a backyard birding class.

Birders are always welcome at Cylburn, and we hope to attract even more with the addition of the eBird Trail Tracker.



MOS birders enjoy some of Cylburn's 154 species.

eBird Trail Tracker at Cylburn Arboretum: Cylburn Is for Birds May 1, 2011

The first eBird Trail Tracker in the state of Maryland will be dedicated at Cylburn Arboretum on May 1 at 10 am during the Cylburn Is for Birds Celebration. Developed and maintained by Cornell University's Laboratory of Ornithology, it provides an interactive gateway to bird sightings around the world. It serves as a tool bird observers can use to view photos, audio, video, and life histories of birds at Cylburn. This technology is especially inviting to youth, who can use it to advance their environmental studies. The observation records become part of eBird, an online checklist program that allows scientists and others to review and share worldwide.

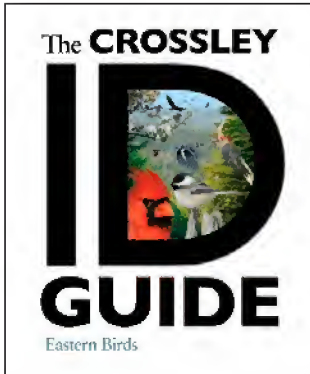
Distinguished Maryland birder and photographer Bill Hubick will present "Birding in a Digital World," with the emphasis on eBird, at 10:30 am at the Vollmer Center at Cylburn. There will be educational and fun birding activities for the whole family all day.

Come and join MOS and the Baltimore Bird Club for this special event.



BOOK REVIEW

The Crossley ID Guide: Eastern Birds, by Richard Crossley • Princeton University Press (Crossley Press), 2011. 545 pp. \$35.00



My first field guide to birds was Chester Reed's classic *Birds of Eastern North America*, 1951 edition. It weighed less than 6 ounces, fitted handily into a hip pocket, and I learned a tremendous amount from it until I graduated to the almost as slender Eastern Peterson guide some time in the late 1960s. Since that time, publishers have

bombarded birders with a long series of books intended to ease the difficulty of identifying birds in the wild.

The newest additions to the fray are two weighty books, neither of them realistically a hip-pocket companion in the field, as both top the scales at over 3 pounds. They are the new *Stokes Field Guide* reviewed on page 10 and the *Crossley ID Guide*. Both make extensive use of photographs by the authors, but beyond that apparent similarity they could hardly be more different. The Crossley guide purports to cover "Eastern Birds," but in fact it covers many such seemingly Western birds as Black-billed Magpie, Greater Roadrunner, and Pinyon Jay.

All hype aside, the *Crossley ID Guide* is a truly new type of field guide. It stems from Crossley's conviction that birds need to be seen as they in fact are viewed in the wild—sometimes closely, sometimes at mid-distance, and often flying away, and in a setting that reflects accurately where the species lives or travels. He's a disciple of the Cape May (New Jersey) school of size, structure, and behavior, and this book and its multiple images are rooted in that semi-religion—quite effectively, in this reviewer's opinion.

The typical page is a montage of photos of the subject bird in a wide variety of ages, sexes, poses, and plumages, high up, low down, close up, and seen from afar. At its best—for example on the page for Black Skimmer—it conveys every essence of the bird, from physical appearance to its style of flight, flocking characteristics, and behavior. Study this page and you will KNOW Black Skimmer, even if you've never seen the bird.

The text under each species, despite being described as "terrible" by one of my birding buddies, is in my view very useful in many cases. Behavioral traits, seldom covered in conventional field guides for lack of space, are given here to good effect. For example, here's the Spotted Sandpiper: "[I]t will stand with its head close to the ground, tail in the air, constantly bobbing, and then suddenly scurry to grab its prey...; it bobs even when standing still." For my

money this description is just as useful as the photos on the page. The best plates, and there are many of them, suggest a superior diorama in a traditional natural history museum, as Carroll County birder Rick Sussman has noted.

However, some sections of the Crossley guide—for example, the flycatchers, thrushes and warblers—are printed in such a way that they look "muddy." Some look like the observer is peering through a curtain of mist. Wallace Kornack, dean of birders at Rock Creek Park, DC, told me he too was disappointed with the subdued colors and lack of sharpness of the warbler plates, although he enjoys the guide overall. I initially thought that this was a fault in the printing process, but in his blog Crossley makes the point that to portray every species with a highly contrasting background would not be "lifelike." Nonetheless, the lack of impact and compelling color of some of the passerine plates is a definite disappointment.



Crossley uses a lot of small-size, light-face type that is often difficult to read, at least by ageing eyes, and the size indications—length in inches—are just about invisible. A conspicuous error occurs in the sparrow section, where the former Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow is correctly named Nelson's Sparrow while the former Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed

Sparrow is called "Sharp-tailed Sparrow" and is even assigned the alpha code STSP, rather than its correct new name, Saltmarsh Sparrow. (This and other errors in the first edition can be found corrected, as they are discovered, in the relevant section of www.Crossleybooks.com.)

Ah, alpha codes. One of the controversial aspects of Crossley's book is its extensive use of four-letter banding codes. For the most part this convention is used to save space in the text blocks, and doubtless it does so, but the all-pervasive codes are certain to pose a partial or complete nuisance to many birders, and not just to beginners. Consider that in the text description of Least Bittern, one of its calls is said to be similar to that of "BBCU"—an unrelated species to be found in an entirely different part of the guide. The uninitiated will need to look up the code in a table at the back of the book. Oh, it's a Black-billed Cuckoo. This sort of diversion could get irritating in a hurry.

continued on page 10

Book Review: Crossley *continued from page 9*

The admiration I felt when I first saw the photos and text in the new Stokes guide has not diminished, but my delight upon seeing the new Crossley guide and its fresh approaches for the first time was much greater—even if the delight was later ratcheted down a few notches by the peculiar color reproduction of some plates and the overall “busyness” of many pages.

It’s questionable whether the Crossley guide will be helpful to beginning birders. I have a suspicion that it is just too overwhelming, although Crossley himself clearly intends to reach beginners. However, I also think that intermediate and perhaps even “expert” birders can learn a whole bunch from this book, starting with the text and continuing with the images. Beginners will be better served by using the

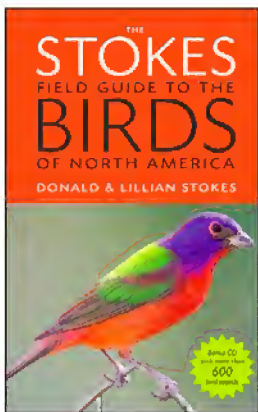
earlier Stokes guide, the latest National Geographic guide, or the Eastern Peterson, which despite its age strikes me as still the most effective and practical aid to identification for the relatively new birder in Eastern North America.

The Crossley guide is more ambitious, more all-encompassing, and just more exciting than all the newly published North American guides of the past ten years. The revolutionary nature of this book makes it a landmark in birding field guide publishing, albeit a somewhat flawed one, at least in this first edition.

—Michael Bowen
Montgomery Bird Club

BOOK REVIEW

The Stokes Field Guide to the Birds of North America, by Donald and Lillian Stokes • Little, Brown and Company, 2010. 792 pp. 3,400+ photos, \$24.99.



With the advent of digital photography, the last decade has seen a proliferation of photographic field guides, and many might wonder whether another is really needed. But this new guide is not just another photographic guide. Though not as novel in its approach, many birders may find themselves consulting it more often than the new Crossley guide. It breaks new ground both in terms of breadth of coverage and the amount and quality of

information provided.

The back cover boasts it is “the most comprehensive photographic guide to North American birds ever published.” It amply delivers on that promise, covering 854 species, including full treatment of almost all ABA code 4 birds (e.g., Green-breasted Mango) and many code 5 (e.g., Brown-chested Martin), with over 3,400 high-quality photos. (ABA codes range from 1 [common] to 6 [extinct]; see the ABA web site for more information.) By comparison, the well-regarded National Wildlife Federation photo guide by Ned Brinkley treats 760 species with 2,100 photos. The trade-off for the Stokes guide’s comprehensiveness is lack of portability; while smaller than the *Sibley Guide to Birds*, it’s too heavy to carry in the field. However, Sibley showed us all that a great identification guide need not also be a *field* guide.

Considerable thought has been put into the layout of this guide, and the result is several clear improvements over other photo guides. For example, each photo is labeled with the month and location it was taken, so, for example, differences in geographic variation and feather wear can be readily compared. This ought to be a feature of every photo

guide. More difficult to identify species are often (though not always) apportioned more photos than those easier to identify. Each species account describes all ABA area subspecies (though not all are depicted), lists hybrids, and includes an impressive list of field marks, including several not mentioned in other guides (e.g., mandible color in Bicknell’s Thrush, black flecks in the eyebrow of Saltmarsh Sparrow, the more forward position of the eye in Cooper’s versus Sharp-shinned Hawk). This book thus usefully combines a range of information that one would otherwise need multiple references to obtain.

Another claimed improvement is less convincing. Each species account begins with a section describing what the authors call “quantitative shape.” They do not provide a clear description of precisely what this is, but they seem to have two goals in emphasizing it. The first is to prioritize size and shape over plumage, following the GISS (general impression of size and shape) school of bird ID. The second is to emphasize, where possible, comparative size ratios, noting that “birds carry their own rulers with them.” For example, the “Shape in Flight” section describing Broad-winged Hawk states “Fairly small compact tail with tapered outer wing. Tail length 3/5 wing width; wing length about 2 x width. Trailing edge of wing is convex during soar, straight to concave during glide.” The section on Thayer’s Gull notes “Chest-to-leg vs. leg-to-wing-tip ratio about 1:2.” While the emphasis on size and shape is welcome, I am not sure the more arcane comparative size ratios are going to be much use for field identification, though they may assist in the analysis of photographs.

The publisher has spared no hyperbole in its claims on the book’s cover. Not only are the authors said to be “widely recognized as America’s foremost authorities on birds and nature,” but their guide is “the biggest, most colorful, most *useful* identification guide to birds ever produced.” Neither



claim bears scrutiny. When I queried birding acquaintances, none recognized Donald and Lillian Stokes as “America’s foremost authorities.” As for being the most useful guide, the big Sibley still reigns supreme among North American guides—even if one ignores arguments that paintings are superior to photos (or vice versa). Despite the Stokes guide’s impressive 3,400 photos (4 per species average), Sibley has almost twice as many depictions (6,600/8 per species average).

The additional depictions allow Sibley to include much that Stokes omits: almost all passerines and woodpeckers in flight, most petrels and shearwaters swimming as well as flying, common gull hybrids, and almost all juvenile sparrows. Thus, Stokes lacks numerous depictions important for identification, e.g., many warbler undertail patterns, a young White-eyed Vireo with a dark iris, white wing patches on a flying Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, an Olive-sided Flycatcher with the white tufts showing at the sides of its rump, the Caribbean race of Cave Swallow that breeds in Florida, and a swimming Leach’s Storm-Petrel with no white visible on the upper tail coverts. In addition, Stokes lacks field mark annotations on its depictions, measurements for wingspan and weight (only length), and treatment of established but currently non-countable exotics such as Purple Swamphen and various parrots and parakeets.

To be a photo equivalent of Sibley, Stokes would have to be transferred to a larger format. A larger format would allow more depictions, a book that would lie flat, and larger maps and text that are small and difficult to read now. I would love to see such a book. Nevertheless, even in the current format it is a most welcome and valuable supplement to my big Sibley.

While the back cover recommends the guide “whether you are a novice or experienced birder,” I would not recommend it for a novice. The species accounts are dry and technical, and there is no attempt to distinguish principal from supporting field marks, such as arrows on the photographs or bold text. Also, apart from a depiction of the bird, what novices need first is not a reference to complex comparative ratios, but information regarding habitat and abundance. The only indication of abundance is the ABA codes, and discussion of habitat is buried at the end and given only a few words.

Finally, the guide has up-to-date taxonomy and nomenclature, and includes the changes in the recent 51st AOU Supplement, including the Winter Wren split and “Great Shearwater.” One oddity, though, is the incorrect name for Black Scoter—it is called “American Scoter.” This reproduces a subsequently corrected error in the AOU supplement.

— Jim Moore
Montgomery Bird Club

Voyage Peru's Amazon ...

...with fellow Maryland birders. International Expeditions (IE) is leading a birding/river trip on the tributaries of the Amazon River June 2-12, 2011—and offering a \$1,000 discount for MOS members! The cost of the discounted trip, double occupancy, is \$2,498 or \$2,698 (depending on the deck you choose). An in-country flight costs an additional \$350. Single occupancy is extra, but we should be able to arrange for a roommate as needed. Air flights from BWI to Lima, Peru, were approximately \$950 at last check. With enough people we can arrange a group air flight, which should cost even less.

This trip is a good introduction to the birds, wildlife, and the people of the Amazon River system. I did this trip with three other MOS members last year, and we had a relaxing and comfortable trip. We also had productive birding; our trip list exceeded 250 species of birds. The local bird guide, George Davila, grew up in a river village, and he is an excellent guide. The boat is comfortable, with private, air-conditioned rooms and hot showers; laundry is done free of charge. Meals are

served buffet style and the food is good; beer, wine, and classic Peruvian Pisco Sours are available.

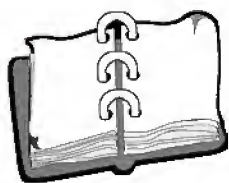
Walking is limited since we do most excursions on smaller boats. These boats are easily accessible and quiet when running, to make wildlife observation more enjoyable. On a few days we will get off the boats and take walks in different habitats. This trip is scheduled for just after the high-water season to give us a good variety of birds.

Give me a call or e-mail me for additional information or to discuss the trip: peterhanan@verizon.net. I can e-mail you a write-up about last year’s trip and a bird list.

Peter Hanan

Anne Arundel Bird Club
301-580-2785 (c) or 301-912-3805 (h).

For additional information you can also contact Jill Stanley, our Destination Specialist with IE, at 1-800-633-4734, ext. 134.



MOS Calendar

May-June 2011

Sunday, May 1

H Anne Arundel. Dent Road. A new, yet-to-be opened park in Anne Arundel Co. Meet at Parole P&R at 8 AM for this half-day trip. Leader: Fred Fallon, 410-286-8152.

H Baltimore. Cylburn Self-guided Walk. Meet 8:30 AM at Mansion's front porch on Sun mornings for easy birding in Cylburn's gardens and urban forest. Beginning birders welcome. Coordinator: Joe Lewandowski, 410-358-7834 or ilenel@juno.com.

FRED ARCHIBALD MAY COUNT. Frederick. Meet at the Sanctuary at 6 AM. Contact Bob Schaefer at 301-831-5660 or VicePres@FrederickBirdClub.org for further info.

H Harford. Eden Mill Park. A bird-banding demonstration will be followed by a walk along Deer Crk to enjoy the bird-rich and diverse habitats of this area. This is a great trip for beginners and children. Expect warblers, kingfishers, and Wood Ducks. Meet at the banding station on Eden Mill Rd at 8 AM. Leader is Mark Johnson, 410-692-5978 or mark.s.johnson@us.army.mil.

H Montgomery. Little Bennett RP. Half day. Near peak migration for warblers and vireos, including those breeding in this varied habitat. For reservations (required), time, and directions, contact the leader: Gemma Radko, 301-514-2894.

H Talbot. Our annual spring trip to the Nassawango Creek Preserve in search of migrant and resident songbirds with our focus on warblers. Last year's trip yielded 14 species of warbler and both tanagers. A bonus at 12:30 PM will be a guided walk on the Nature Conservancy's Prothonotary Trail and visit to the bird-banding station on Nassawango

Creek. Bring drinks, lunch and insecticide. Leader: Terry Allen, 410-829-5840. Depart Easton Acme parking lot 6:30 AM.

Tuesday, May 3

H Baltimore. Cromwell Valley Park. First in a series of casual spring walks to follow the progress of migration. Beginning birders welcome. The park has a variety of habitats including fields, stream-side woods, and hillside forest. Expect a variety of migrant and resident birds. Meet 8:30 AM. [At the Willow Grove Farm Entrance, follow road, cross a small bridge, and park in lot on left.] Leader: John Landers, 410-426-3374 or dado1bw@aol.com.

MEETING. Baltimore. Tuesday Evening Lecture at Cylburn's Greenhouse Classroom, 4915 Greenspring Ave. "Identifying Spring Warblers by Sight and Song." A visual and audio presentation with *Pete Webb*. Doors open at 7 PM for socializing and snacks, show starts about 7:15 PM. Note: Meeting cancelled if Balt. City schools are closed due to inclement weather. When in doubt, check with lecture chairman Pete Webb, 410-486-1217 (h) or 443-904-6314 (m), or pete_webb@juno.com.

H Montgomery. Rock Creek Park, DC. Early migrant warblers, vireos, etc. Meet 7 AM at Picnic Area #18, one-half mile below the Nature Center on Ridge Rd. Call the leader for more info and for specific directions. Limit: 8. Reservations required. Leader: Wallace Kornack, 202-338-7859.

Wednesday, May 4

H Baltimore. First Wednesdays at Fort McHenry. Monthly survey of bird activity at the wetland. Scopes useful. Automatically cancelled in bad weather (rain, fog, etc). [From I-695

southwest of the city, take I-95 north (exit 11) towards the city. Get off at exit 55, Hanover St. Turn right (east) on McComas St, left (north) on Key Hwy. Take first left onto Lawrence St and turn left onto Fort Ave; continue through gateway into the park.] Meet outside the Visitor Center at 8 AM. Leader: Mary Chetelat, 410-665-0769.

MEETING. Cecil. Program TBA. 7 PM at the Elkton HS. For more info, contact President Maryanne Dolan at maryanne.dolan@gmail.com.

MEETING. Carroll. "Wildflowers of Maryland" by *Gary Van Velsir*. S. Carroll Senior Center, 7:30 PM, 5928 Mineral Hill Rd., Eldersburg, MD. Contact Dave Harvey, 410-795-3117, for more info.

H Montgomery. Exploring Calvert County with local expert Sue Hamilton. Meet 7 AM at the road leading to Flag Ponds. We'll visit Battle Creek Cypress Swamp and other hotspots before stopping for lunch on the beach. Reservations required; limit 10. For detailed directions and more info, call coordinators: Lydia Schindler, 301-977-5252 and Linda Friedland, 301-983-2136.

Thursday, May 5

H Frederick. First Thursday Mornings. Leader and destination TBA. Meet at Baker Park by Culler Lake at 8 AM. Return at approximately 11 AM. For info, please contact Pat Caro, 301-845-6246.

MEETING. Frederick. (PLEASE NOTE CHANGED TIME AND LOCATION). 7 PM at Frederick HS. Our own *Bob Schaefer* will present his original video compilation: "Nesting and Raising the Young."

H Patuxent. Lake Artemesia (Luther Goldman Birding Trail). Joint trip with PGAS. Meet 6 PM at the parking lot at Berwyn Rd and Ballew Ave in Berwyn Heights. No reservations needed. Call 301-459-3375 for more info.

H Indicates Field Trip

Friday, May 6

MEETING. Anne Arundel. 8 PM at the Arlington Echo Outdoor Education Center. "Playing Dr. Doolittle: Understanding the Complex Singing of Northern Mockingbirds and the Singing and Social Behavior of Dusky Antbirds and Wood Thrushes." *Dr. Kim Derrickson*, Associate Professor of Biology at Loyola U.

DINNER MEETING. Harford. Donna Yorkston and Tom Gibson present "Birding Uganda." 6:15 PM dinner; 7 PM program at Harford Glen, 502 W. Wheel Rd, Bel Air. Contact Dave Webb at 410-939-3537 or porzana@comcast.net for add'l info.

Montgomery. Birding by Ear. The emphasis is on listening so tune up your ears for this half-day C&O walk. Migrant and nesting landbirds. Meet 7 AM at the end of Pennyfield Lock Rd. Reservations required. For more info and reservations call the leaders, Cyndie Loeper, 301-530-8226, and Ann Lucy, 301-229-8810.

Saturday, May 7

Anne Arundel. Southern Maryland. North Beach, Cypress Swamp, Flag Ponds, and Calvert Cliffs SP. Facilities at some stops. Bring lunch. Leader: Nick Nicholson, 410-353-3329. Meet 7 AM at Parole P&R.

Baltimore. Milford Mill Park. One-mile level walk on paved path for migrant warblers, thrushes, tanagers, grosbeaks, and other songbirds Meet 7:30 AM at small lot near park entrance off Milford Mill Rd. If the lot is full, park along the side street across Milford Mill Rd from the park entrance. Leader: Pete Webb, 410-486-1217 (h) or 443-904-6314 (m), or pete_webb@juno.com.

Cecil. Courthouse Point Road. Courthouse Point MHA is one of the most productive birding sites in Cecil Co, boasting a long list of regular and accidental species from both dry and wet habitats. Meet 6 AM near Dunkin' Donuts in Big Elk Mall, intersection of Rte 40 and Rte 213 in Elkton for a half-day trip. Easy walking on mostly level

ground. Sun screen and bug spray are recommended. Leader: Maryanne Dolan at maryanne.dolan@gmail.com.

MAY COUNT. Dorchester. 87th Annual Count. Compiler: Harry Amistead, harryarmistead@hotmail.com.

Frederick. Tuckahoe SP. Full day. We will visit this lovely wooded state park straddling Queen Anne's and Caroline Counties during the peak of spring migration. Leaders: Marcia Balestri, 301-473-5098, and Kathy Calvert, 301-698-1298.

Harford. Winters Run Road. A quiet 3-mile stroll along this primary Harford Co waterway, which boasts a low-traffic tree-lined pathway with some farmland and meadow habitat attracting a variety of birds, with the promise of heron, kingfisher, and an abundance of passerines during the spring. Join co-leaders Dave Larkin and Lynn Davis at 7:30 AM at the Rte 24/I-95 P&R. Contact Lynn Davis, 410-569-0504 or lynnd@iximd.com, or Dave Larkin, 410-569-8319 or dlarkin@towson.edu.

Howard/Montgomery. Pigtail, Triadelphia Reservoir. Also in conjunction with WSSC. Meet 8 AM at the Green Bridge Rd parking lot off Triadelphia Mill Rd in Howard Co. The cove is bordered on three sides by deciduous and coniferous woods. Extensive mudflats may exist with the possibility of shorebirds. Facilities available (rustic). Leader: Jeff Culler, cullerfuls@hotmail.com or 410-465-9006.

BIG DAY. Howard. All day listing extravaganza! Limit: 12. Plan to spend the day hiking around the county in search of as many species as possible. All types of footwear needed. Bring food and drinks. Brief lunch stop planned. Facilities in some spots. Call Bonnie Ott to sign up at 410-461-3361.

LITTLE BIG DAY. Howard. Half day. This trip is designed for beginner and intermediate birders and will not be as intense as the Big Day trip. Some of the same locations as the Big Day trip may be visited. E-mail or call the leaders for reservations and details.

Facilities in some spots. Leaders: Karen Darcy and Kevin Heffernan, 410-418-8731 or KJHeff@aol.com.

Kent. Beginner's Bird Walk at Libby's Nature Trail, Kent Co. An attractive wooded trail hosting nesting woodpeckers, Great Crested Flycatcher, Red-eyed Vireo, Wood Thrush, and Scarlet Tanager, it is also attractive to migratory songbirds. Half day. Meet 9 AM at Dollar General parking lot, Chestertown. Leaders: Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or rossgull@baybroadband.net.

Patuxent. Fran Uhler NA. Meet 7:30 AM at the end of Lemon Bridge Rd off MD 197, just north of Bowie State U and the MARC line. No reservations required. If you have questions, contact trip leader Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com.

Sunday, May 8

Anne Arundel. Piney Orchard and Patuxent Wildlife Refuge North Tract. Meet at Parole P&R at 7 AM for this half-day trip. Leader: Peter Hanan, 301-912-3805.

Baltimore. Leakin Park. Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park is an approximately 1,200 acre wilderness park in west Balt City. It contains mature and secondary forest as well as riparian habitats and some limited field habitat. Meet 8 AM at the parking lot at the corner of Windsor Mill Rd and Eagle Dr (1900 Eagle Dr). Leaders: Elise and Paul Kreiss, 410-367-8194 or ekreiss@toadmail.com or pkreiss@toadmail.com.

Baltimore. Cylburn Self-guided Walk. Meet 8:30 AM at Mansion's front porch on Sun mornings for easy birding in Cylburn's gardens and urban forest. Beginning birders welcome. Coordinator: Joe Lewandowski, 410-358-7834 or ilenel@juno.com.

AUDREY CARROLL MAY COUNT. Frederick. Meet at the Sanctuary at 6 AM. Coordinator: David Smith, 410-549-7082.

Calendar continued from page 13

Harford. Harford Shorebirds. Meet at 7 AM at Swan Harbor Farm to search among the impoundments, fields, and beaches of this birding hotspot for migrant shorebirds as they rest and feed while making their way to the Arctic. Leader is Dave Webb, 410-939-3537 or porzana@comcast.net.

Montgomery. Izaak Walton League Property, B-CC Chapter. Half day. The Club's first official field trip to this large private property south of Poolesville, previously birded only as part of the Seneca CBC. Woods, hedgerows, streams, fields, and ponds provide a wide range of bird habitats, and migration should be in full swing. Trip will start at 7 AM at the League's chapterhouse. Reservations required, but no attendee number limit. Driving directions will be provided to those who make reservations. Please contact leader, Mike Bowen, 301-530-5764 or dhmbowen@yahoo.com. B-CC Chapter Treasurer and MBC member Jim Tate will co-lead.

Talbot. Marshyhope, Federalsburg. Leader: Vince DeSanctis, 410-886-2009. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 7 AM.

Monday, May 9

Washington. Warm up for the May Count at Antietam Battlefield. Call Mark Abdy at 301-432-7696 for details.

Tuesday, May 10

Baltimore. Cromwell Valley Park. Continuing series of casual spring walks to follow the progress of migration. Beginning birders welcome. See May 3 listing. Leader: Ron Davis, 410-821-1297 or 2athigh1@verizon.net.

MEETING. **Kent.** "Trogons and Motmots," by Kurt Schwarz. 7:30 PM at Wesley Hall, Heron Point, E Campus Ave, Chestertown. For info, contact Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568.

MEETING. **Patuxent.** Peter Osenton will present "Birding South Kenya." The formal program begins at 7:30 PM, but doors open at 7 PM for informal conversation, refreshments, and exchange of birding news. Location: College Park Airport Annex. For

more info, contact Fred Shaffer at glaucousgull@verizon.net.

Thursday, May 12

Meeting. **Howard.** "Birds of Southern Africa," by Mark Abdy. Having grown up in southern Africa, Mark has led eight safaris throughout SA, Namibia, and Botswana. Hospitality and club bookstore 7:30 PM; meeting/program 8 PM at Howard Co Rec and Parks, 7210 Oakland Mills Rd, Columbia. Info: Ward Ebert, 301-490-5807.

Saturday, May 14

* MAY COUNT. **Allegany.** To participate, contact J.B. Churchill, jchurchi@atlanticbb.net, 301-689-8344 or 301-697-1223 (c) to be assigned an area to count.

* MAY COUNT. **Anne Arundel.** Contact compiler, Dotty Mumford at 410-849-8336 or dottymum@comcast.net for more details.

* MAY COUNT. **Baltimore.** All-day count of birds in Balt City and Co. For area assignments call compiler Joel Martin, 410-744-9211 or jcdlmartin@aol.com.

* MAY COUNT. **Calvert County.** Compiler: Sue Hamilton, 410-586-1494 or seal10n2002@yahoo.com.

* MAY COUNT. **Caroline.** Compiler, Debby Bennett. Contact her at firefly5845@hotmail.com for more info.

* MAY COUNT. **Carroll.** Contact Bill Ellis to coordinate count locations at 443-520-8809. The Tally Rally will be hosted by Jerry and Laura Tarbell at their home. RSVP to Jerry and Laura Tarbell at 410-857-1109 if you will be attending the Tally. Please plan to bring a cash donation or a food item.

* MAY COUNT. **Cecil.** No count in 2011.

* MAY COUNT. **Charles.** Compiler: George Jett, 301-843-3524 or gmjett@comcast.net.

* MAY COUNT. **Dorchester.** 88th Annual Count. Compiler: Harry Amistead, harryarmistead@hotmail.com

* MAY COUNT. **Frederick.** Compiler: Mike Welch at 301-685-3561 or manddwelch@comcast.net to assist.

* MAY COUNT. **Garrett.** To participate contact Fran Pope, fpope@gcnetmail.net or 301-334-4908.

* MAY COUNT. **Harford.** Contact Compiler, Rick Cheicante, at rickcheicante@cs.com.

* MAY COUNT. **Howard.** Compiler: Kevin Heffernan, 410-418-8731 (h) or KJHeff@aol.com.

* MAY COUNT. **Kent.** Compilers: Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or rossgull@baybroadband.net.

* MAY COUNT. **Montgomery.** Compiler: Diane Ford, dmford455@yahoo.com.

* MAY COUNT. **Prince George's.** Compiler: Fred Fallon, 410-286-8152 or fwfallon@earthlink.net.

* MAY COUNT. **Queen Anne's.** Compiler: Glenn Therres, therres@atlanticbb.net.

* MAY COUNT. **St. Mary's.** Compiler: Bob Boxwell, 401-394-1300 or bobboxwell@hotmail.com.

* MAY COUNT. **Somerset.** Compiler: Paul G. Bystrak, paul@bystrak.com.

* MAY COUNT. **Talbot.** Please contact compiler to coordinate count areas. Compiler: Les Coble, 410-820-6165 or lescoble@hughes.net.

* MAY COUNT. **Washington.** Contact Dave Weesner, 301-302-6376 or DWeesner@dnr.state.md.us to help with the local effort.

* MAY COUNT. **Wicomico.** Contact Ellen Lawler for details and checklists at 410-546-9056 or emlawler@salisbury.edu.

* MAY COUNT. **Worcester.** Compiler, Mark Hoffman, wcbirding@comcast.net.

H Indicates Field Trip

28TH ANNUAL WORLD SERIES OF BIRDING. New Jersey Audubon will proudly host the 28th annual World Series of Birding—North America's premier conservation event. This event has changed the birding landscape and raised over \$8,000,000 for bird conservation. Every species found, every dollar raised preserves and protects critical bird habitat.

Sunday, May 15

■ Anne Arundel. Finzel Swamp/Green Ridge. Meet 6:30 AM at Parole P&R. We will stop for dinner on the way home; bring a lunch. Leaders: Larry Zoller, 410-987-9354, and Dick Adams.

■ Baltimore. Owings Mills Mall Wetland. Willow Flycatcher, Green Heron, Blue Grosbeak, Yellow-breasted Chat, and Orchard Oriole are just a few of the birds that breed in and around the Mall's wetland area. Leader: Keith Eric Costley, 443-985-6489 or oriolekec1@comcast.net. Meet 7:30 AM near movie theater parking lot (there's a pond downhill on the right).

■ Baltimore. Cylburn Self-guided Walk. Meet 8:30 AM at Mansion's front porch on Sun mornings for easy birding in Cylburn's gardens and urban forest. Beginning birders welcome. Coordinator: Joe Lewandowski, 410-358-7834 or ilenel@juno.com.

■ Montgomery. Rock Creek Park, DC. See May 3 listing. Reservations required. Limit: 8. Leader: Wallace Kornack, 202-338-7859.

■ Talbot. Adkins Arboretum/Tuckahoe SP. Leader: Danny Poet, 410-827-8651. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 7 AM. Or meet leader at 7:30 AM at West side (Queen Anne's side) of Tuckahoe Lake at boat ramp parking area.

Tuesday, May 17

■ Baltimore. Cromwell Valley Park. Continuing series of casual spring walks to follow the progress of migration. Beginning birders welcome. See May 3 listing. Leader: Joan Cwi, 410-467-5352 or jafjsc@verizon.net.

Wednesday, May 18

■ Howard. Henryton Road. Plan for moderate walking; possibly muddy trails areas. This area of Patapsco Valley SP is nesting area for Yellow-throated, Worm-eating, and Cerulean warblers. Meet 8 AM at bottom of Henryton Rd at the dead end. Leader Joe Byrnes, 410-730-5329 or LBRoller@verizon.net and Jeff Culler, 410-465-9006.

MEETING. **Montgomery.** "Birding in the Great North: Maine, Quebec, and Nunavut." *Bob Schaefer* will take us north, where one can see up close some of the birds we rarely get a glimpse of in MD—puffins, gannets, and razorbills along the coast, and longspurs and Harris's Sparrows in the tundra. 7:30 PM at Potomac Presbyterian Church, 10301 River Rd, Potomac. For more info, contact Steve Pretl at stevep@takomavillage.org.

Thursday, May 19

MEETING. **Caroline.** Members' Night. 7:30 PM, Caroline Co Public Library, 100 Market St, Denton.

■ Harford. Jerusalem Mill. Take a mid-week break and wander along the lush Little Gunpowder Valley. Meet at the Mill on Jerusalem Rd at 7 AM. Leader is Phil Powers, 410-679-4116 or birdsinmd@verizon.net.

■ Patuxent. Lake Artemesia (Luther Goldman Birding Trail). Joint trip with PGAS. Meet 6 PM at the parking lot at Berwyn Rd and Ballew Ave in Berwyn Heights. No reservations needed. Call 301-459-3375 for more info.

Friday-Sunday, May 20-22

MOS ANNUAL CONFERENCE. WISP Resort, McHenry (Garrett Co). Join your fellow birders from across the State of Maryland for the MOS Annual Conference, featuring field trips, workshops, social events, business meeting, and special guest speaker for the gala banquet. Volunteers are needed to assist with all aspects of the Conference, including registration, leading field trips, and helping with the silent auction. Add'l info: Janet Shields, janetbill@prodigy.net.

Saturday, May 21

■ Baltimore. Saturday Monitoring Walks at Fort McHenry. Continuing survey of bird activity at the Fort. Scope can be useful. Cancelled in bad weather (rain, fog, etc). Meet 8 AM in the park, outside the Visitor Center. [From I-95, take Hanover St/exit 55, McComas St (last exit before tunnel eastbound, first after tunnel westbound) east, left (north) on Key Hwy which turns west, first left Lawrence St, left (east) on Fort Ave, continue east to gate into Fort McHenry. From the JFX/I-83 south to St Paul St exit, south on St Paul which becomes Light St, then left (east) onto Fort Avenue. Continue to end as above. Park outside the Fort (on the left just before the gate) on the lot along Wallace St.] Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.

■ Cecil. DE Bay Shorebird Migration. Join Sean "Bird Dog" McCandless for a full-day tour of the best shorebird spots on the DE Bayshore. The trip is timed to coincide with the peak of shorebird migration, and the various refuges along the DE River and Bay present a spectacle of thousands of shorebirds—a sight (and sound) not to be missed. Meet near Dunkin' Donuts in Big Elk Mall, intersection of Rtes 40 and 213 in Elkton at 8 AM. Be prepared to car pool. Bring lunch, snacks, and drink and a scope if you have one. Wear sturdy shoes, for possible muddy conditions. Leader: Sean McCandless, seanmccandless1@comcast.net.

■ Kent. DE Bay Shorebirds and Horseshoe Crabs. The annual May gathering of northbound shorebirds feeding on Horseshoe Crab eggs on the shores of Delaware Bay is a migration spectacle. Birds should be abundant just days after the full moon. Full day, bring lunch. Meet 8 AM at Dollar General parking lot, Chestertown. Contact leaders for meeting time. Leaders: Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or rossgull@crosslink.net.

Calendar *continued from page 15*

Patuxent. Governor Bridge NA. Meet 7:30 AM at the parking lot for Governor Bridge Park. No reservations required. [Park is located on Governor Bridge Rd, approximately 1 mile east of MD 301.] If you have questions, contact trip leader Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com.

Tri-County. Worcester County Inland Bays. Shorebirds, marshbirds, and other migrants. Bring snacks and drink. Meet 7 AM in Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art parking lot on S Schumaker Dr on Beaglin Park Dr in Salisbury. Leader: Sam Dyke, 410-603-7615.

Sunday, May 22

Anne Arundel. DE Bay. Full day. Contact leader Gerald Winegrad, 410-280-8956, for info. Meet 7:30 AM at Bay 50 Shopping Center. Bring lunch; dinner stop on the way home.

Baltimore. Cylburn Self-guided Walk. Meet 8:30 AM at Mansion's front porch on Sun mornings for easy birding in Cylburn's gardens and urban forest. Beginning birders welcome. Coordinator: Joe Lewandowski, 410-358-7834 or ilenel@juno.com.

Baltimore. Halethorpe Ponds. This lightly used area of Patapsco Valley SP includes includes woods, freshwater ponds, second growth, and a powerline right-of-way. Wading birds, terns, flycatchers, vireos, swallows, warblers, and orioles are among the expected birds. Moderate walking; trails may be very poor and muddy. No facilities. Meet 7 AM at the Nursery Rd P&R. Leader: Joel Martin, 410-744-9211 or jcdlmartin@aol.com.

Talbot. Susquehanna SP. New club outing for migrating warblers. Depart Easton Acme parking lot 6:30 AM or meet leader 8:30 AM at Havre de Grace P&R lot at I-95/Rte 155. Leader: Cathy Cooper, 410-822-3451.

Monday, May 23

MEETING. **Tri-County.** Program: "Birding in Costa Rica," by *Larry and Jean Fry*. 7 PM at Asbury Methodist Church, Fox Rm, south entrance,

Camden Ave, Salisbury. For more info, contact Betty Pitney at 410-543-1853.

Tuesday, May 24

Baltimore. Cromwell Valley Park. Continuing series of casual spring walks to follow the progress of migration. Beginning birders welcome. See May 3 listing. Leader: Paul Noell, 410-243-2652 or myconut@verizon.net.

Harford. Mariner Park in Joppatowne. This beautiful county park is full of birds and provides an easy, wheel-chair accessible trail for all to enjoy. This trip, like most of our trips, is open to all, but a special invitation is extended to wheelchair and limited-mobility birders. Join leader Phil Powers, 410-679-4116 or birdsinmd@verizon.net, at 8 AM to look for eagles, migrants, and waterfowl. Meet at the Park Pavilion. Those in need of mobility assistance should contact the leader in advance.

Montgomery. Washington County: Seeking Breeders and Late Migrants. 3/4 to full day. Explore some of Washington Co's under-birded treasures. Expect some birding from the road mixed in with some moderate hikes. Paths could be wet in some areas. We will visit several parts of Indian Springs WMA, look for grassland birds in the farm country west of Hagerstown, and finish with some stops at potential shorebird habitats. Bring snacks, drinks, lunch, insect repellent, etc. Reservations required. Limit: 10. Carpooling strongly recommended. For reservations and directions to meeting place, call leader Jim Green at 301-742-0036.

MEETING. **Washington.** It's movie night! Marvel at the stunning abilities of the planet's smallest warm-blooded animals in the film "Hummingbirds/Magic in the Air." 7 PM at the Mt. Aetna Nature Center. Call 301-7979-8454 for details.

Saturday, May 28

Baltimore. Bombay Hook NWR, DE. Full-day trip for a wide variety of migrating shorebirds. Possible

spectacular assemblage of breeding plumage turnstones, Sanderlings, and Red Knots. Curlew Sandpiper possible. Be prepared for possible heat and biting insects. Minimal walking involved. Scopes very useful. Bring a lunch. Meet 7 AM at Nursery Rd P&R, I-695, Exit 8. Alternatively, meet 9:15 AM at the Bombay Hook Visitor Center lot. Leader: Pete Webb, 410-486-1217, 443-904-6314 or pete_webb@juno.com.

THIRD ANNUAL EPIC BIRDING CONTEST.

Harford. Join a team for friendly competition and for bragging rights on finding the most species at Susquehanna SP. Meet at the Rock Run Mill at 6:30 AM for team selection and rules review. Counting will begin at 6:45 AM and end at 11:30 AM. Rally celebration will occur at 12 noon at the Laurapin Grill in Havre de Grace. Coordinators are Tom Gibson, 410-734-4135 or gibsonlld@aol.com, and Sue Procell, 410-676-6602 or suzanne.procell@us.army.mil.

Howard/Montgomery. Hot Spots for Red Knots. Full day. We will start at 8:30 AM at the Prime Hook NWR Visitor Center and work our way north along the Bay. We will also visit the nature center at Mispillion Lighthouse, which offers great views of Red Knots and other shorebirds. We will go until dark or exhaustion, whichever comes first. Bring binoculars, scopes, food, water, sunscreen, loads of insect repellent. Trip is limited to 12 persons/3 vehicles per chapter. Reservations required. Co-leaders: Kurt Schwarz, krschwa1@comcast.net or 410-461-1643, and Cyndie Loeper, cyndieloeper@comcast.net or 240-535-8584.

Sunday, May 29

Harford. Conowingo Dam. A great place in Harford to see eagles and orioles as well as Prothonotary Warblers. Meet at the new observation platform at the north end of the parking lot at 8 AM. The leader is Les Eastman, 410-734-6969 or les@birdtreks.com.

H Howard. Patapsco Scrubland. Starting in the shrubland, we'll look for warblers, vireos, thrushes, and other edge species. Meet 7:30 AM at 735 River Rd (up long drive, take right-hand split and park by house). Leader: Felicia Lovelett, 410-489-7169 or c5nest@gmail.com.

H Patuxent. Bombay Hook NWR, and the Shores of DE Bay. Meet at Bowie P&R at 7 AM. Bombay Hook NWR should have huge shorebird numbers at this time of year; other stops may include Port Mahon Rd and other area hotspots. RSVP required; contact Fred Fallon at 410-286-8152 or fwfallon@earthlink.net.

H Talbot. DE Bay Shore. Species count could reach 100 or more. Leader: Charles Hopkins, 410-763-8742. Bring lunch and bug spray. Depart Easton Acme parking lot 6:30 AM.

Monday, May 30

H Harford. Upper Deer Creek Valley. Explore the streams and ponds of NW Harford Co and visit the World Famous Bradenbaugh Flats. Expect to see warblers, Horned Lark, Grasshopper Sparrow, and Willow Flycatcher. Meet at the northern end of Madonna Rd where it crosses Deer Crk at Hidden Valley at 7 AM. Leader is Dennis Kirkwood, 410-692-5905 or dkirkw@verizon.net.

Thursday, June 2

ANNUAL PICNIC. Frederick. Our favorite spot for this event is Pine Cliff Park, where there is a lovely pavilion in the (ahem!) unlikely chance of rain. Bring binoculars, a dish to share, plate, utensils, and drink. We'll meet at 6 PM for birding and eats. Contact Kathy Calvert for info at 301-698-1298 or Pres@FrederickBirdClub.org.

H Patuxent. Lake Artemesia (Luther Goldman Birding Trail). Joint trip with PGAS. Meet 6 PM at the parking lot at Berwyn Rd and Ballew Ave in Berwyn Heights. No reservations needed. Call 301-459-3375 for more info.

H Indicates Field Trip

Saturday, June 4

MOS BOARD MEETING. Hosted by Carroll Bird Club at Piney Run. Info: Janet Shields, janetbill@prodigy.net.

H Frederick. Battle Creek Cypress Swamp. Half to 3/4 day. This 100-acre sanctuary in Calvert Co offers a variety of habitats and should be especially alive with birds and birdsong this time of year. Leader: Lois Kauffman, 301-845-6690.

H Howard/Montgomery. Patuxent River SP, Hipsley Mill Rd. 2-3 hrs. Meet at 7:30 AM. We will walk downriver with our main target being breeding Cerulean Warblers along the Howard/Montgomery border. Other notable nesting birds include American Woodcock, Yellow-throated Vireo, Veery, American Redstart, Worm-eating Warbler, Kentucky Warbler, and Hooded Warbler. Moderate to possibly difficult walking with steep trails, waist-high wet vegetation, and muddy paths, so wear appropriate footwear. Hand-clippers can be valuable to cut the Multiflora Rose canes, which are difficult to avoid. No facilities. Co-leaders: Joe Hanfman, auk1844@comcast.net or 410-772-8424 and Jim Moore, epiphenomenon9@gmail.com.

H Patuxent. Fran Uhler NA. Meet 7:30 AM at the end of Lemon Bridge Rd off MD 197, just north of Bowie State U. and the MARC line. No reservations required. If you have questions, contact trip leader Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com.

Sunday, June 5

H Harford. Bombay Hook NWR, DE. The premier location on the East Coast for shorebird migration. Join leader Russ Kovach to search for the rare and the familiar. Meet at 7 AM at the 155/95 P&R. Bring a picnic lunch. A comfort/fast food breakfast stop will be made before arriving at the park.

ANNUAL CLUB PICNIC. Kent. 5 PM. Join us for a potluck picnic at the Lodge at Eastern Neck NWR. Includes a short meeting to elect officers for next year and gather speaker and trip

suggestions from members. Contact Nancy Martin/Walter Ellison at 410-778-9568 or rossgull@crosslink.net for more details.

Tuesday, June 7

PLANNING MEETING. Allegany/Garrett. We'll be meeting to decide about the schedule for next year so bring your ideas for speakers, field trips, and other projects. For best results, we need your ideas at or before the planning meeting. 7 PM at the Carey Run Sanctuary.

Wednesday, June 8

H Howard. Trolley Trail. Mature woodlands should be hosting many nesting species. Meet 8 AM. [Go through Ellicott City on Main St. Immediately after crossing the Patapsco River in Balt Co, turn left. Drive about 100 yds and turn right into the Oella lot.] Easy walking along the paved path of this Balt Co section of Patapsco Valley SP. Leader: Michele Wright, 410-465-6057 or WrightM_29067@msn.com.

Thursday, June 9

CHAPTER PLANNING MEETING. Frederick. Everyone please come to our 2011-2012 planning meeting and volunteer to give a program or lead a field trip. We need new ideas and suggestions. Meet at 7 PM at Kathy Calvert's house. Contact Kathy at 301-698-1298 or Pres@FrederickBirdClub.org for info and directions.

Saturday, June 11

HARFORD BIG DAY CHALLENGE "BREEDER'S CUP." Harford. Harford County challenges all MOS chapters to identify as many breeding birds as possible within their County's border during this 24-hour period. One team or multiple teams may participate. Contact Matt Hafner, MH1920@aol.com or 410-971-3203, for further details.

H Patuxent. Jug Bay. Meet at the boat ramp behind the Jug Bay Visitor Center by 7 AM. This boat trip, led by Greg Kearns, will take our group out onto Jug Bay, up the Patuxent River,

Calendar *continued from page 17*

and up Western Branch in search of late migrants and nesting marsh birds. This always-popular trip will last most of the morning. Limit: 18 participants. \$5 per person. RSVP required; contact Fred Shaffer at 410-721-1744 or glaucousgull@verizon.net.

Sunday, June 12

H Harford. Fallston Grassland Birds. Search the farm fields of W Harford for open-country breeders. Meet at the Royal Farm Store at Hess Rd and Rte 146 (Jacksonville Pike) at 7 AM. The leader is Mark Johnson, 410-692-5978 or mark.s.johnson@us.army.mil.

Tuesday, June 14

H Allegany/Garrett. Green Ridge SF Nightbirds. (Rain date June 15). Explore the night life of this beautiful state forest. This is one of the state's hotspots for Whip-poor-wills, and they should be singing non-stop on this moonlit evening. Barred Owls are likely and we will look for other nightbirds as well. Meet 8 PM at the SF HQ [exit 64 off of I-68]. Reservations required. Please call leader, Gwen Brewer, at 301-752-9239 by June 10 if you plan to attend.

MEETING. **Patuxent.** Members' Night. Bring digital photos or slides to share with the group from your birding adventures of the past year. Limit of 20 slides per member so all who want to show slides have time. Contact Dave Mozurkewich, 301-459-3375, for details about logistics to ensure that slides are in a format compatible to the available equipment. The formal program begins at 7:30 PM, but doors open at 7 PM for informal conversation, refreshments, and exchange of birding news. Location: College Park Airport Annex. For more info, contact Fred Shaffer at glaucousgull@verizon.net.

Thursday, June 16

H Patuxent. Lake Artemesia (Luther Goldman Birding Trail). Joint trip with PGAS. Meet 6 PM at the parking lot at Berwyn Rd and Ballew Ave in Berwyn Heights. No reservations needed. Call 301-459-3375 for more info.

Saturday, June 18

H Harford. Railing at Swan Harbor. Join this early-evening search for 3 rail species, always special sightings due to their reclusive nature. Owls will also be on the agenda. Meet at the park at 7:30 PM. Leaders are Sue Procell, 410-676-6602 or suzanne.procell@us.army.mil, and John Gallo.

H Patuxent. Governor Bridge NA. Meet 7:30 AM at the parking lot for Governor Bridge Park. No reservations required. [Park is located on Governor Bridge Rd, approximately 1 mile east of MD 301.] If you have questions, contact trip leader Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com.

Saturday, June 25

SUMMER PICNIC AT AMY HOFFMAN'S. **Carroll.** Another chance to talk birds, eat, drink, and have fun with fellow birders. RSVP to Amy Hoffman, 410-549-3598, if you plan to attend.

H Harford. Canoe/Kayak Trip at Eden Mill. 7-9 PM. Enjoy an evening paddle on Deer Creek while birding the shoreline. Eden Mill will provide the boats for a nominal fee. Contact the leaders George and Donna Yorkston, 443-402-0809, for more details and a reservation.

Sunday, June 26

PICNIC. **Washington.** Meet at 4 PM at Camp Harding. Bring your own place setting, drink, a dish to share, and a lawn chair. Call 301-797-8454 for directions.

Friday, July 8

SUMMER SOCIAL AND MEETING. **Harford.** Speaker TBD. 6:15 PM at Anita Leight Estuary Center. Contact Dave Webb at 410-939-3537 or porzana@comcast.net for add'l info.

Saturday, July 9

COMMUNITY OUTREACH. **Cecil.** 2nd Annual North East River Wade-In. Join us as we pull up our pant legs and wade into the Upper Chesapeake Bay to measure water quality the way retired MD State Senator Bernie Fowler did 23 years ago with his

"sneaker index." 9 AM-12 Noon, North Bay, 11 Horseshoe Pt Ln, North East. For info, contact Sean McCandless at 410-996-5267.

Saturday, July 23

H Harford. Conowingo Dam. Search for terns, gulls, warblers, and shorebirds along the Susquehanna. Meet at the new observation deck at the northern end of the parking lot at 7:30 AM. Leaders are Tom Congersky, 410-658-4137, or jnjtcon@zoominternet.net and Randy Robertson, 410-273-9029 or r.christian.robertson@gmail.com.

H Montgomery. DE Coastal Areas. Call leader to confirm that trip is on. Bombay Hook, Little Creek, and Logan Tract. Join us for a full-day joint trip with ANS. Shorebirds, marsh birds, and some songbirds. Bring packed lunch and drinks. Meet at 8 AM at Bombay Hook Visitor Center parking lot. Limit: 15. For reservations and more information, contact the leader, John Bjerke, 240-401-1643. Cyndie Loeper will co-lead.

Wednesday, July 27

H Montgomery. Poplar Island Boat Trips. There is no cost for these trips but seats are limited (20). Expect a good selection of shorebirds, terns, gulls, and a few waterfowl. Half of the seats will be reserved for MBC members up until a week before the trip. To make reservations and for details about departure time and meeting place, call Barry Cooper at 301-989-1828 or coops1939@yahoo.com.

Saturday, July 30

H Harford. Hummingbird Banding. See our smallest birds up close as host Les Eastman and Bander Bruce Peterjohn trap and band Ruby-throated Hummingbirds. Meet at 8:30 AM at the Eastman residence. Call Les for directions, 410-734-6969 or les@birdtreks.com.

Saturday, August 6

H Cecil. Birding by Kayak. Explore the waters of the Elkton marshes with Sean McCandless. This is a good way to search for rails and shorebirds as

well as terns during the high point of the migration season. Meet 7 AM at Brownie's Shore (Elk River Park Boat Ramp), off Old Field Point Rd. Bring your own kayak and paddle. Also, of course, bring and wear a life preserver. Leader: Sean "Bird Dog" McCandless, seanmccandless1@comcast.net.

H Harford. Dragonflies, Butterflies, and Birds. Join leader Terry Haley at 8 AM at Swan Harbor Farm to look at a variety of flying critters. Contact Terry for further info, 410-569-3324, 443-250-2964 or Terry.Haley@charming.com.

Saturday, August 13

H Baltimore. Bombay Hook NWR, DE. Full-day trip for a wide variety of migrating shorebirds. Be prepared for possible heat and biting insects. Minimal walking. Scopes very useful. Bring a lunch. Meet 7 AM at Nursery Rd P&R, I-695, Exit 8. Alternatively, meet 9:15 AM at the Bombay Hook Visitor Center lot. Leader: Pete Webb, 410-486-1217, 443-904-6314 or pete_webb@juno.com.

H Harford. Hummingbird Happy Hour. Enjoy your favorite snack and beverage while watching dozens of Ruby-throated Hummingbirds. Meet at the Eastman house at 5 PM. Call Les for directions, 410-734-6969 or les@birdtreks.com.

Wednesday, August 17

H Montgomery. Poplar Island Boat Trips. See July 27 listing for details.

Saturday, August 20

H Harford. Nighthawks and Owls. A dusk/twilight trip to look for some of our more elusive birds. Meet at the Jarrettsville ES parking lot at 7 PM. Bring a lawn chair for a sky watch to start on the Bradenbaugh Flats. Then the trip will move to Hidden Valley and attempt to find three species of owls. The leader and contact person is Dennis Kirkwood, 410-692-5905 or dkirkw@verizon.net.

Saturday, August 27

H Harford. Cape May, NJ. A visit to one of the best birding locations on the East Coast at prime time for migrating warblers. Meet at 5:30 AM at the 155/95 P&R. Leaders are Dave Webb, 410-939-3537 or porzana@comcast.net, and Randy Robertson, 410-273-9029 or r.christian.robertson@gmail.com.

Sunday, August 28

PICNIC. Washington. Meet 4 PM at the Washington Monument pavilion. Bring a place setting, drink, and a dish to share. Call 301-797-8454 for directions.

MAINTAINING THE LISTS

For the past 10 years **Norm Saunders** has handled the monumental task of preparing the Annual Locality List Report, which documents the year's birding milestones in Maryland and the District of Columbia. The report identifies the top listers in myriad categories—state and county and yard, all-county, all-species/all-county, annual and life, even birds photographed. Now Norm has announced his retirement, and President Mark Johnson is looking for a replacement. If this appeals to you (and you have the requisite computer skills), or if you know of someone who might be willing to take over this task, please contact Mark, mark.steven.johnson@comcast.net.

TRACKING THE WOOD THRUSH, DC'S OFFICIAL BIRD

Wood Thrush is the official bird of the District of Columbia. Range-wide, it has lost half its population over the past 45 years. While still a common migrant through DC, Wood Thrushes are increasingly rare as breeding birds. They still breed in Rock Creek, Fort DuPont, and Glover-Archbold Parks.

To celebrate the official bird of DC and the importance of forested parks in DC, Montgomery County Bird Club member *Greg Butcher* is planning a series of bird walks, citizen science projects, and outreach efforts from April 15 through June 30. He has scheduled a bird walk every Saturday morning in one of the three parks mentioned above, plus a few Wednesday evening walks. From April 15 through May 15, Greg will collect data on the use of trees and food items by migrating Wood Thrushes and other forest birds using a "habitat oasis" protocol.

Greg needs help from botanists who know the woody plants of DC, as well as birders. From May 25 through the end of June, he will conduct a Bird Blitz in the three parks, documenting the nesting of Wood Thrushes and other Forest Interior Dependent Species (FIDS) in the three parks, using methods developed by Audubon Maryland/DC. Volunteers who can identify breeding birds by sight and sound will be asked to walk mile-long routes in these parks and mark the location of birds.

Anyone interested in Saturday morning or Wednesday evening bird walks or helping out with the citizen science or outreach projects should get in touch with Greg at gbutcher@audubon.org, or 414-238-5298. All this is made possible by a TogetherGreen fellowship awarded to Greg, who is Director of Bird Conservation for the National Audubon Society and based in DC.

"Thanks to Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center, DC's Department of the Environment, the park staffers, the DC Audubon Chapter, and all of you for helping out."

—Greg Butcher

LAST CALL

... for **Chapter and Committee Annual Reports.** Submit them to President Mark Johnson (mark.steven.johnson@comcast.net) by May 15.

... for **Research Proposals.** Grants (generally no more than \$2,000) are available for ornithological research in the state of Maryland. Info and submission requirements are posted online (<http://www.mdbirds.org/education/grants/grants.html>); applications are due by June 1. For further details, contact Dave Ziolkowski (djiolkowski@yahoo.com).

MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.

*Cylburn Mansion
4915 Greenspring Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21290-4698*

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WANTED: SEASON REPORT EXPERT**Purpose:**

To help Bob Ringler in preparation of quarterly Season Reports of Maryland bird observations for publication in *Maryland Birdlife*.

Qualifications:

1. General knowledge of bird classification (such as sequence of families)
2. Knowledge of Maryland bird distribution and migration dates
3. Familiarity with some of the major contributors of bird information (helpful)

Duties:

1. Sort incoming records by season: winter (Dec. 1–Feb. 29), spring (Mar. 1–May 31), breeding season (June 1–July 31), and fall (Aug. 1–Nov. 30).
2. Sort each season by major families. Many reports will include multiple families and so will not be sortable. (With training, observers should be able to report their species in approximately taxonomic sequence to save compilers trouble.)
3. Contact observers as needed (to verify data, provide missing info, etc).
4. Read one or two of the recent Season Reports for the season in question to get familiar with the style, then
5. Write draft Season Reports. This includes:

- a) Summarize quarterly weather, including significant departures from normal that may affect bird reproduction or populations.
- b) Select important observations for publication, including names or initials of observers, and list taxonomically (by latest AOU classification).
- c) If a migration season, prepare a table to summarize hawk and vulture observations at key stations.
- d) Don't worry too much about AOU's changes in taxonomic sequence and changes in common English names of birds, a few of which now occur annually; it will still be Bob's and Chan's responsibility to watch for these.

Once you become proficient at writing reports, you may be asked to "adopt" a season and write that one each year.

Work Location:

At Bob Ringler's home in Eldersburg in southern Carroll County or at your own home.

Rewards (MOS has no budget for publications staff):

1. Excellent opportunity to increase your knowledge of bird distribution, migration, changes in abundance, and reasons for these changes.
2. Excellent experience in technical writing.
3. All participants will be acknowledged in each issue they help with.